PUBLIC MEETINGS.

CITY GOVERNMENT FOR 1856. THE MAYOR'S MESSAGE.

ORGANIZATION OF THE COMMON COUNCIL. BOARD OF ALDERMEN.

Monpay, Jan. 7 .- At noon to-day the members men and were aworn into office by Mayor Wood. All were

present except Ald, Steers, The counsel of Mr. Sengrist objected to Ald. Drake All Bangen opposed any interference until the Board

The Maron accorded to this, and said he could not

go behind the returns of the County Clerk. Ald, Brown was then appointed Chairman, pro tem.

for the purpose of organizing.

Ald, Ranken was elected President on the first ballet. The vote stood: Ald. Barker, 13; Ald. J. W. Rrown, 4; Ald. Varian, 4. Total votes, 21. Aldermen W. Tucker and Clancy were appointed a

Committee to conduct the President to the chair. The PRESIDENT then addressed the Board as

GENTLEMEN OF THE BOARD OF ALDERMEN: I ten-

GENTIEREN OF THE BOARD OF ALDERMEN: I tender you my thanks for the honor which you have conferred upon me by electing me President of the Board for a second term. I am conscious of the responsibility of the station, but shall endeavor to discharge the duties which it imposes by conducting the proceedings of the Board, so far as I bave an influence on them, with dispatch and impartiality.

There the amended charters of this city, much curbarrassment and difficulty have been experienced in the legislation of the Common Council. Experience has demonstrated that our present system of Municipal Government does not meet the expectations of our selectivems. Nevertheless, let it be our aim to make its working as economical and advantageous to the interests of the city as the system admits.

Gentlemen, as citizens of the common Council, we feel a just pride in her elevated position. As members of the first branch of the Common Council, we feel the importance of the trusts represented in us. Let

bers of the first branch of the Common Council, we fee the importance of the trusts represented in us. Le-ger efforts be united, not only as crizens but as mem-bers of her government, to do everything in our powe-that will add to her general prosperity. The Messag-alis Henor the Mayor and the Keports of the Execu-tive Departments will be presented to us, and it is out duty to give them a fair and careful consideration.

Charlengers 1. The discharge of my duty order and

GENTIEMEN: In the discharge of my duty order and decount shall be maintained and impartiality shall be observed, and I shall with pleasure receive your aid in the performance of that duty. On motion of Ald. VOORBIS, the clerks were balloted

for, and the following was the result: D. T. Valentine, Clerk of the Common Council, by a unanknous vote Jeseph B. Young, Deputy Clerk, by a vote of 12. On this John H. Chambers received 10 votes. Reeves G. Selmes was appointed First Assistant and Alfred Cooper Second Assistant. Hart B. Weed was re appointed Sergeant-at-Arms.

A protest against Ald. Druke taking his seat from Mr. Sengrist was referred to a Committee.

Ald. Clancy, Fulmer and Voorhis were appointed as a Committee to wait on the other Board and inform them that this branch was now organized. A Commitice of Ald. Ely, Brown and Griffith were appointed to wait on the Mayor. On their return his Honor's Message was announced, and after being partly read, was ordered to be printed.

Nominations .- A communication was received from the Street Commissioner, nominating Charles Turner as Deputy Commissioner, and Joseph R. Taylor as Collector of Assessments. On motion of Ald. Voorius, Mr. Turner was con

firmed. Mr. Taylor's nomination was laid on the table. A communication was received from Mr. Selah, Commissioner of Repairs and Sapplies, making the following nominations for his Department: John O'Toole, as Clerk: J. G. Seix, as Assistant; James Irving, Supt. of Repairs to Public Buildings; Henry C. Woolery, Supt. of Pavements: Alex. Ward, Supt. of Roads. These were, on motion of Ald. FULMER, laid on the table.

Ald, CHAUNCY offered a resolution to inquire of the Counsel to the Corporation whether the Street Commissioner had the authority to remove the assistants in his Department. Laid on the table.

The Annual reports of the Croton Department, and the Counsel to the Corporation, were received and crdered to be printed.

The Board then adjourned to Thursday.

ORGANIZATION OF THE BOARD OF COUNCILMEN. At 12 o'clock yesterday the Members of the newly elected Board of Councilmen appeared in their places in the Chamber of the Board, City Hall, and proceeded to take their oaths of office in accordance with the requirements of the Charter. Mayor Wood

officiated in the administration of the oath. R. S. Dixon, Councilman elect from the Twentyfourth District of the Ninth Ward did not appear in his place on account of sickness.

When the Members had been sworn in Mr. Cooper of the Ninth Ward moved that Mr. Barney of the

Fifth Ward be appointed temporary President,
Mr. BOOLE of the Eleventh Ward moved to amend by substituting the name of Mr. Phillips of the Eighth Ward. The motion to amend was lost. The original motion of Mr. Cooper was then carried by a vote of 31

The Clerk then appointed Messrs. Waugh and Raymond a Committee to conduct the temporary President to the chair. On taking his seat, Mr. BARNAY briefly thanked the

Beard for the honor conferred upon him in selecting him as temporary President. Mr. BAXTER moved that the Board go into the elec-

tion for permanent President, which motion was car-Mr. VAN RIPER moved that thirty-one votes be re-

quired to elect, which was also carried. The temporary PRESIDENT then appointed Messrs H. Smith, Farrau and Van Riper tellers to receive the

The first and second ballots were pronounced to be informal, sixty votes being cast-one more than the

number of members present. Aldermen Voorhies, Fullmer and Clancy, a committee of the Board of Aldermen, here appeared in the Board and announced that the Board of Aldermen was

organized, and were prepared to receive any commu-nication from the Board of Councilmen.

On the third ballot for President the vote stood as follows: Benjamin F. Pinckney, 31; Orlando Gray,

Mr. Pieckney was declared duly elected President of

the Board. Messrs. Crane and Raymond were appointed a com-

mittee to conduct the President elect to the chair.
On taking his sent, the President said: OR THERDS OF THE BOARD OF COUNCILMEN; In accepting the honorable position to which your kindness has called me, I beg to express to you my sineere thanks for so great a mark of your confidence and extern.

thanks for so great a mark of your confidence and exteem.

Selected to preside over a body having charge of the interests of the first commercial city in America—a city destined, doubtless, to become the first in the world—the more popular of its legislative branches, and the one in which, under its charter, all bills requiring an expenditure of the public money must originate—I sensibly realize the great responsibility resting upon me as your presiding officer.

• We are, gentlemen, the representatives of various and widely-separated sections of the city—sections having, it may be supposed, diverse interests.

Let us, at the threshold of our labors, divest our selves of all sectional spirit or partisan feeling, and, as the representatives of the citizens of this great metropolis, enter upon our duties in a spirit of concord.

In the performance of these duties, differences of cpinion will, as in all deliberative assemblies, necessarily arise.

cpinion will, as in all dehberative assets as a sarriy arise.

Let me implore you, that in all these discussions you have the implore and adexhibit calminess and a desire only to protect and advance the interests of the great constituency which you represent: that you exercise a careful guard over language, that nothing may be uttered calculated to create accurage a careful guard over language. guage, that nothing may be uttered ealeulated to create acrimony or mar the harmony which should ever exist among members of a legislative body, and as you have confidence in your own integrity, so confide in the integrity of each other.

In the discharge of the duties upon which I am about to enter, I shall need your generous assistance and support.

Governed by such rules as you in your wisdom may adopt, I shall expect and endeavor to enforce a strict comphance therewith, to the end that system may govern in all our action, expedition be insured, and dignity and decorum preserved.

And now, gentlemen, let me solicit you to enter upon your duties with zeal and energy, exercising such commendable judgment in their discharge as to secure to yourselves the confidence and the approval of an enlightened constituency.

Mr. PRILLIPS moved that the Board go into the decrease of a Clock

election of a Clerk.

Mr. Swan moved to amend, so that the motion should read, that Charles F. McClenachan be redicated Clerk of the Board for the ensuing year, by acclanation. The amendment was accepted, and Mr. McClenachan was reflected by a unanimous vote. On motion of Mr. PHILLIPS the Board proceeded to

the election of a Sergeaut-at-Arms,
Mr. Grav moved that Nicholas M. Slidell be reflect. od Sergeant-at-Arms by acclamation. The motion was carried by a unanimous vote.

Mr. Gaar then moved that the rules of order of the past Board of Councilmen be adopted by this Board, intil otherwise ordered. The motion was adopted. On motion the President was empowered to appoint

ommittees to wait upon the Mayor and Board of Aldermen, and inform them that the Board was organ ized and ready to receive communications.

The President appointed as such committees Messrs Swan, Gray, Avery, Taylor and Miller, and Mesers. Barney, H. Smith, Floyd, B. Reilly and

The committees then left the Chamber to dischare their duties.

John A. Towles was then elected Deputy Clerk manmously by acclamation.

The Board, on motion, went into the election of As istant Clerk by ballot.

Charles A. Holder having received a majority of be votes was declared reflected. On motion. John E. Green was reclected Messenge

of the Board by ballot. Col. Ming, the Mayor's Clerk, then came into the Chamber with the Mayor's Message, which was received, and after being partly read was ordered to lie on the table and be printed.

The Board then went into ballot for Doorkeeper. Four ballots were had without a result, when the Board adjourned to meet on Wednesday.

On the last ballot the vote stood as follows: James M. Hoyt, (K. N.,) 20; James H. Faxin, (Dem.,) 23; Wm. H. Peabody, (present incumbent, K. N.,) 14;

composed of sixty members, of whom two are

Whigs, thirty-two Know-Nothings and twenty-six Democrats, Among the members are three Smiths three Roll

leys and two Hoppers.

A COLLATION.

After the adjournment of the Board of Councilment yesterday the Clerks of the Board, who had been reelected to their several positions, invited the Members of the Board to partake of a collation which had been prepared at Delmonico's. After the repast was duly partaken of, the hosts of

the occasion, the President of the Board, the retiring Board, the Board of 1854, the present Board, Councilman Dixon (now confined to his house from injuries received at a fire), the PRESS, Ex-President Conover, and different Members were severally toasted. Brief and appropriate speeches were made by President Pinckney, Mr. Clenachan, Ex-Conneilman Kennedy, Conneilman Swan, Ex-Councilmen Mason and Trus-low, Councilman Gray, Aldermen Herrick and Clancy, Councilmen Phillips, Watrons and others, after which

THE MAYOR'S MESSAGE.

MAYOR'S OFFICE, NEW-YORK, Jan. 7, 1856, Gentlemen of the Common Council:

I congratulate you upon the opening of anothe official year, amid the general good health and prosperity of the people over whose public welfare it is our duty to preside. Ours is an important trust; le us approach its fulfillment with a due sense of its magnitude and a firm determination to discharge it with fidelity and usefulness.

To make laws for and properly govern a city like this is a duty as responsible and onerous in its per-formance as it is high and honorable in character.

The extending area and the increasing population of New-York have aiready surpassed the ability of the law-making power to provide for their interests. Our prosperity has been so rapid that local legislation has hitherto been unable to keep pace with its progress. The many and varied interests-the vast and complicated connections existing between ourselves and every other section of our own, as well as of most foreigu countries-the peculiar character of the popula tion, and the new resources which are continually veloped, demand of us to exert eve

tion, and the new resources which are continually developed, demand of us to exert every effort to make the provision imperatively demanded by our present position as well as our progressive greatness. I fear, however, we do not realize even our present greatness, much less that so plainly indicated in the future as the mighty metropolis of a confederation numbering a hundred millions of American Freemen.

Upon a careful review of the municipal history of this city, it does not appear to me that the same energy and intelligent forethought, have been displayed in its public affairs, as have characterized our people in trade and commerce, science and education. While within about a half century, New-York with its immediate dependencies, from a population of 60,000 in 1800, has arisen to be the third city in the world in 1855; and in all the ennobling attributes of religion, private and public benevolence, educational advantages, commercial wealth and enterprise—to a position second to none; yet in its form of government, its internal regulations, the integrity with which its public affairs are managed, and in the adaptation of its municipal administration to its public wants, it is to-day far inferior to a dozen other cities in the Union of half its population and importance. While we have progressed in the accumulation of the elements of presperity, we have retrograded in the means to preserve our power and provide for the necessaries of our condition.

The idea of Government, whether National, State or Municipal, is very simple. It is inerely Government.

necessaries of our condition.

The idea of Government, whether National, State or Municipal, is very simple. It is merely Government. It is the care of the public interest—a provision for the general welfare—the enacting and the exacting of such rules and regulations as will best protect the rights and interests of all, without discrimination as to class or sect. The Federal Government is restricted to the exercise of such powers as have been directly delegated by the States, and to such subjects of legislation as are specifically enumerated in the Constitution. The powers of the State Government extend to all that appertains to the Commonwealth, not conferred upon the towns, counties, etc.; and of the City Government, to everything connected with local matters under its charter of incorporation. The Government of the city is far more utilitarian and practically perceptible than either of the other Governments. It directly involves and affects the comfort, interest or health of every citizen. It is a living, ever present fact; we see and feel it daily. There are none so humble or obscure, or so powerful and rich, as to be exempt from its operations. Every man, woman and child of our resident population is dependent upon government as administered in this city. Nor is its influence confined to the narrow limits of its own jurisdiction. It is wide spread throughout the land. The tens of thousands of visitors from other cities and States, witness its operation, and carry home its impressions, which in turn affect their own localities for weal or wee. Therefore, New-York is politically what Paris is to France, still the fact is, that, in the influence of its prosperity that New-York is politically what Paris is to France, still the fact is, that, in the influence of its prosperity. say—and I hope may never be able with trath to say—that New-York is politically what Paris is to France, still the fact is, that, in the influence of its prosperity or adversity, so much dependent upon its local government, New-York affects a wider extent of territory, involving more vital social interests and considerations than the capitals of Louis Napoleon and Queen Victoria together.

Am I not therefore justified in declaring that our local legislation and the management of our executive offices have not fulfilled the requirements of our present wants, to say nothing of our future destiny! It appears to me that temporary expedients and feeble efforts, seldom successful—schemes of private advantage, as well as of partisan interest, costing millions to the people—comprise about all that has been done for this great city by its public authorities; and that with all our reform agitation and assumed close attention to local polities, we are strangely deficient in the grasp of intellect and breadth of comprehension necessary to devise proper provision for New-York as it is, much less for New-York as it will be. The introduction of the waters of the Croton River, and the projection of the Central Park, are about all that has been done in keeping with a theral policy.

But it may be asked, whether it is too late to recover ourselves in these respects. I think not; though we ris together.

Am I not therefore justified in declaring that our local legislation and the management of our executive

have attained the dimensions of advanced maturity we are still young in years. It is not too late to remedy the errors and ourselons of the past, by the a lop tion of measures corresponding with the prospects be tion of measures corresponding with the prospects be-fore us. It is true we cannot, nor is it important that we should medernize the width and regularity of the streets of Old New-York, now its extreme southern border; nor can we now, nor is it desirable, that we should attempt to imitate the great cities of Europe in the ornamental grandeur of our public buildings, or the magnificence of our public squares and parks; but in all that is essential to the physical well-being, to the full development of the trade and commerce, and to

full development of the trade and commerce, and to the preservation of property and the promotion of the general welfare, it is not too late to devise and adopt permanent measures, in keeping with our present as well as future condition.

Having in view another communication more de-tailed in its suggestions, and more recommendatory in its character, I do not propose now to go into a discus-sion of the improvements required to remedy the de-fects and supply the omissions of the past; it is suffi-cient for the present occasion to revert to the source whence we have derived prosperity, and generally to the deading measures necessary to preserve, maintain and increase it.

I propose, therefore, to consider now, the questions,

the leading measures necessary to preserve, maintain and increase it.

I propose, therefore, to consider now, the questions, to what is New-York the most indebted? and in what is it that she is most deficient? If in discussing these questions it seems that an innovation has been made in the peculiarly local tenor of documents of this kind, by the introduction of national topics, I beg you to rember that our city is of national interest, as success national importance, and that its rise or downfall is inseparably connected with, and more directly dependent upon the legislation and policy of the Gen-eral Government than that of any commonwealth in the Union. Therefore, if for the first time an attempt the Union. Therefore, it for the first time an accompa-is made to bring the power of this city, through its cor-porate authorities, to bear upon the General Govern-ment by an official demand for a recognition of our weight, let me ask that the magnitude of the interests hyolved may be deemed a sufficient warrant for the introduction of topics apparently foreign to this oc-

FOREIGN COMMERCE,

FOREIGN COMMERCE,

With its concomitant, Domestic Commerce, is the
germ whence has sprung our might. To that interest,
the first and most lastingly beneficial of all departments of industry—the richest in its results and the
most ennobling in its character, as spreading the mantle of civilization, disseminating pence and intelligence, and good-will from man to man; as an instrument in the bands of Almighty God, by which his word
is carried to the furthermost ends of the earth; we are
indebted for the foundation lupon which rests the corindebted for the [foundation lupon which rests the cor-ner-stone of all our prosperity.

Our power is derived from commerce. Our geo-

graphical position, together with the energy, industry, abinty, and capital of our people, has enabled us to outstrip our sister cities in the struggle for commercial mastery, and has placed us among the first cities of the world. Without commerce, we could not have accom-plished this; it has added to our population a hal-million in a quarter of a century—has drawn to us the miflion in a quarter of a century—has drawn to us the capital and enterprise of every quarter of the earth—has enabled us to lead in works of benevolence, philanthropy and religion; to aid our sister cities and States in building up their own localities, and has developed the agricultural, mineral, and manufactung resources of the whole country. Without commerce, the New-York of to-day would have been but little more populous than the New-York of the last century. It is commerce that has made us what we are, and to it we must look to maintain the supremacy we possess. Therefore it is maintain the supremacy we possess. Therefore it is important to retain this great element of power unimpared. With it we can be everything—without it, nothing. Now, as this interest, like all others, flourishes most when least subjected to governmental interference, undoubtedly, in a full consideration of the question presented, we cannot overlook the restrictions which have been imposed upon it by the Federal Government.

opinion the mode of collecting revenue by imposts, heretofore adopted, has been detrimental not only to our own interests, but to those of the whole

only to our own interests, but to those of the whose country.

The levying of imposts upon importations is to the extent of the impost a hinderance to commerce, and anything that is a hinderance to commerce is adverse to every other department of industry. To declare that every cargo or article of merchandise brought to our port, from a foreign country, shall be subjected to duty, viz: tax, before it be allowed to come on shore for sale or consumption, is, to the extent of the sum elemented, together with its mode of collection, an elemented intercourse with foreign nations.

It matters little to the industry and capital in New-

commercial intercourse with foreign nations.

It matters little to the industry and capital in New-York in what form and by what mode or pretext trantion is exacted. Every operation of Government the object of which is to raise revenue, imposes a burden

upon the people.

We endure taxation from three several sources to aid in the support of three independent Governments. The City Corporation spends its millions per annum, and makes its levies upon our property for reimbursement. The State relies upon us for large contribu-tions to its School and other funds, and the Genera Government looks to New-York for two thirds of its Government looks to New-York for two thirds of its whole revenue. It is of little concern whether these sums are required in the aggregate, or whether thus separated into three distinct demands. There is no difference in the effect, whether the draught be made by a levy upon our property, as in the case of the city and State, or whether upon our consumption and trade, as in the case of the General Government. The mode varies, but the results are the same.

It is no answer to say that we have prospered notwithstanding these restrictions. That we have flourished even under these burdens is the greater wonder and the higher compliment to our enterprise. What would New-York not have been if left to the laws of trade and of nature—free to the interchange of commodities with all other countries? If our port had been freed from the interference of the thousand agents

been lett open to menony egres, and it been freed from the interference of the thousand agents through whom the Government appropriates a portion of the earnings of our trade with which to lill the national coffers, we should have now stood, not the third, but the first city of the world. New-York, and third, but the first city of the world. New-York, and indeed the whole country, requires unlimited Free trade: exemption from restrictive or special legislation, and the severe exactions upon the industry of the people which follow in its train. We may not always peacest the inherent vigor required to surmount the obstacles in our way arising from this cause. Spain was once foremest among the nations, and Cadiz are the first of Furnment parts. They have fallen Spain was once foremest among the nations, and Cadrz among the first of European ports. They have fallen a sacrifice to a mistaken commercial policy not unlike that of our own Government. Spain has long since ceased to hold a place among really independent nations, and now lies a victim to her own suicidal system. Her neighbors but await the day for her partition, and her island colonies the dominion of a freer and more

enlightened Government.
Or look to Mexico! She followed the commercial example of her ancient mother, adhering to error with Spanish tenacity. Upon this rock she, too, became a

Wreck.

I know that public opinion in this country traces to other influences her degraded downfall; but, whatever the immediate causes may be, it is my conviction that the gold collected by Custom-House duties, and used the conductionary generals and corrupt rulers, has been by revolutionary generals and corrupt rulers, has been the instrument of destruction by which Mexican liberthe instrument of destruction by which Mexican liberties and nationalities have been paralyzed and booken down; corrupt rulers, thus obtaining gold, first demoralized and then betrayed that ignorant people; and now the descendants of the haughty Spaniard in North America are, by the beckening of an unseen but all-powerful Hand, following the fading trail of the red man. The influences which control the rise and fall of empires and no truer illustration than in the history of Spanish dominion in America. The end of what is left of it is obvious. It must seen be obliterated. Let us prepare to fill the vacancy, which, in spite of ourselves awaits our occupation. The same destiny which first sent the sons of Spanish to debauch and conquer the Indian; and then vacancy, which, in spite of ourselver are the sons of pation. The same destiny which first sent the sons of Spain to debauch and conquer the Indian; and then the more hardy sons of Bertain in turn to succeed them, with liberal institutions upon which to erect a mighty self-centrolling political power, will direct the further progress of the republican principle under the stars and stripes, until not only Mexico but in the not distant future the whole of Central America, will asknowledge our sway, and become a portion of this confederation of independent States.

In this march of empire our own emporium is to hold no insignificant position of command. Our capital and navigation, together with the indomitable spirit of adventure, and bold, hardy enterprise of the West and South, will head this army of territorial acquisition. If it is to be a peaceful conquest the commerce of New-

South, will bead this army of territorial acquisition. If it is to be a peaceful conquest the commerce of New-Yore must lead the van; if it be by force of arms, New-York must supply the sinews of war. In any form by which this great drams is to be played out, through the inscrutable mystery of destiny we are to be the main actors, and our resources, existing only through and by commerce, are to be the immediate Therefore let it be said to the whole country

that our increase is their gain; our onward progress their advancement; our welfare to be secured by the their advancement: our welfare to be secured by the absence of all governmental restrictions upon the sources of our strength, the security of their own present presperity, and the means by which their future is to be made more brilliant.

In this advocacy of freedom from governmental restraints, I wish to be understood as declaring a principle equally advantageous to every section of the country and to every branch of industry. I do not recommend this policy for the explusive benefit of our city, even were it possible to separate its interests from those of the rest of the Union. It requires no argument to prove that just as the prosperity of News

from those of the rest of the Union. It requires no argument to prove that just as the prosperity of New-York is of advantage to every State in the Union, so the general internal thrift arising from the successful prosecution of every branch of trade, and

manufactures, and of agriculture throughout length and breadth of the land, is independent of the prosperify of New-York. But independent of this nection and identification of interests, the policy I connection and identification of interests, the policy I advocate is not adverse to the true policy of any other section. The whole country will advance as Government interference with private industry is withdrawn. Freedom is the theory upon which our institutions are founded; and freedom in the excress of opinion, whether political or religious, and in the pursuit of gain — whether by manufactures, commerce or agriculture—freedom in the full development of the immense resources of our noble land, securing to all the enjoyment of the largest liberty compatible with equal justice, subjected only to the immensible laws of nature, and the preservation of the individual rights of all. Freedom thus illustrated, is the great principal of American progress. progress.

THE CITY GOVERNMENT.

Having thus briefly directed attention to the source of our present strength and future reliance, and pointed out the principal difficulty in the way of a full development of our elements of growth, it is now proper to refer to what in my judgment are the leading internal defects. These I propose to consider in a general manner.

Next to Commerce, the principal, and it may be said with truth, the vital, internal element upon which the City of New-York depends, is its government—its government in form and its government in execution. The form of government is of incalculable moment; for though it is true that the incumbents of the several offices, constituting as they do the body which is to carry out the government, of whatever kind it may be, can do much to impair its efficacy and subvert its intention, still they are accountable to legal tribunals and can be periodically changed. Not so with the fundamental charter or law of government itself. This is or should be permanent in its duration, and, if possible, perfect in its system. It is not extravagant to say that this city, for a century, has not had a charter adapted to its wants, and in all respects adequate to its requirements. Next to Commerce, the principal, and it may be said its requirements.
Our corporate history will show that so far as or-

game law was concerned, the municipal franchise as well as the rights of the people were better protected when the form of government was constructed by foreign hands than since we have been exercising these functions for ourselves through our State au-

It is singular that these charters when emanating It is singular that these charters when emanating from "the one man power" afforded more security for the corporate rights of the city, and a more certain protection for the property of the citizens, than the popular ones of late years, which have been the creation of the rox populi. The Dongan charter of 1686, or that of Montgomery of 1730, would be better adapted to New-York now than the hybrid, incongruous, and inadequate amendments of our own adoption. It is quite certain that although the former furnishes the foundation upon which these amendments have been made, and upon which we have been continually assuming to improve, that the improvements are reall not improvements in fact. If ever the history of the charters, and of their times, shall be carefully written it will be seen that with all our advancement, we ar As New-Amsterdam and as New-York we have had

As New-Amsterdam and as New-Tork we have had the Dutch charter, camaating directly from the home Government in 1657; the Nicholl, or first English charter, of 1665; the Dongan charter of 1686; the Moutgomery charter of 1730; the amended charter of 1830, with the recent amendments of 1849, 1851 and 1853. It is true that some of these may be called merely grants from the Home Government, but they are still interesting from containing the idea of their times, as to what constitute corporate rights and municipal government, and as contrasting very favorably with the supposed superior intelligence of the present day. The chief merit of these ancient Constitutions consisted in the concentration of power; and as we have strayed from this essential element of municipal government, as applied to ment of municipal government, as applied to this city, with its tens of thousands of the dissolute and lawless, we have, in my judgment, departed from the true path and introduced fundamental errors product-ive of the present anarchy, which is almost the absence ive of the present anarchy, which is almost the absence of any government whatever. It is in this great difference between the series of amendments of 1843, 1851, and 1853, and the more compact, solid features of the charter of 1830, that much of the present discontent sriese. That there must be power all will admit, and that this power must be sufficient to secure control none can deny, and that executive authority, equally disseminated among several heads, each separate in action and independent in prerogative, with but partial check or hinderance in any quarter, is not such a one as can govern New-York, ative, with but partial check or hinderance in any quarter, is not such a one as can govern New-York, must be apparent to all. This is not government, it is little better than legalized anarchy. The distribution of equal power in the Executive departments, without one head, is subversive of true government. This is peculiarly so among a people who have learned to look upon these heads as places of large pecuniary gain, the value of which is increnzed as the right to control them is decreased. When the law itself frees a public officer, having the disbusement of large sums of money, from accountability, or when accountable, the responsibility is fixed in a vague, inapplicable manner. money, from accountability, or when accountable, the responsibility is fixed in a vague, inapplicable manner, it is difficult to see how the interests of the treasury are to be protected, in times of such lax integrity as now pervades the office-seeking and the office-holding part of the community; for although there are exceptions, few men of stern integrity and high-toned, honorable principles, are to be found canvessing for the support of the corrupt interests in society, now almost indispensable to secure these places of trust. I look upon the want of concentration of now almost indispensable to secure these places of trust. I look upon the want of concentration of power and absence of sufficient check to the action of the several departments, together with the weak and almost powerless condition of the miscalled Chief Ex-cutive Officer, as the main defects in the present government of the city. In my judgment we can never have improvement without an entire change of the present system in these respects. The administra-tion must be a unit. There must be one head to which the other functionaries should be subordinate, all act the other functionaries should be subordinate, all act n barmony and concert.

The Mayor should be to the city what the President of the United States is to the General Government, and the several heads of the Departments should be his Cabinet, appointed by him, gathering their directions from his will, if needs be effect proper consultation, and be liable, for cause, to removal by him. The Mayor, having simple power over every municipal wrong, should be held to the most severe and rigid accountability to the people and to the Courts, not only for his own acts, but for the conduct of the subordinates who hold their places by his appointment; and they in turn should be accountable to him, holding their offices should be accountable to him, holding their offices during his own term or for a shorter period, if in his judgment the public interest demand a change. These checks and safeguards would create a solid yet truly Republican Government; the people would know where to go for redress of grevances, if, indeed, under this system, any serious grievances would exist; every wrong could be promptly removed, for each official would feel the necessity of compliance and of general good behavior as include. removed, for each ome at would behavior as the ten compliance and of general good behavior as the ten by which his office is held. I do not mean to asset the perfect of th that even this form of organization would be perfect for nothing is perfect that the mind of man conceive or the act of man performs; but so far as the wants or the act of iman performs; but so far as the wants of the people of this great city are concerned, I mean to assert that, without these principles incorporated in our erganic law, we shall never have a Government which, in its Executive department, can yield present satisfaction, much less prepare the way for that bright future, to which, in spite of ourselves, we are rapidly tending, as the first of modern cities.

Similar views on this subject were presented by me in a somewhat different form, in my first Messige to your predecessors. Like the other recommendations made to those badies they failed to clicit action. Subsequent experience in the office of Mayor, has fully

made to those bodies they falled to elicit action. Sub-sequent experience in the office of Mayor, has fully confirmed them, and I repeat them now with less heat-tancy, as it is quite improbable they will be adopted and take effect during my term; thus rendering me ex-empt from the suspicion of a desire to increase the patrorage of the office for personal objects.

patronage of the office for personal objects.

The want of power has been the main difficulty thus far in the way of my administration. The improvements made by me, if any, have been accomplished more through the exercise of will and energy than by the legal prerogatives attached to the Mayoratry. The absence of that moral force, which statutory protection will always throw around the doings or a public efficer, when acting in pursuance of undoubted legal authority, has weakened my influence and impaired the efficiency of my action. The vicious clement in our middle coalescing with contributions the manner of the production of the pro our midst, conlescing with correptionists who have long depended upon the treasury, together with anti-onistics) partisan interests ever ready to decry a enistics) partisan interests ever ready to decry at man of opposite political affinities, even though he is unexceptionable in personal character and offici-action, soon discovered my want of jurisdiction ovnotion, soon discovered my want of jurisdiction over many abuses existing smorg us; and by concert and coalition, sought to subvert and destroy the strength of my position, and render futile my efforts toward re-form. It has been the policy of this combination, to declare me responsible for numerous abuses, while de-pying my right to abute them, and as soon as the effort to remove them was made, to denounce me for an remove them was made, to denounce me for an egal assumption of authority and the exercise of the one-man power." With these interests and their illegal assumption of authority and the exercise of the "one-man power." With these interests and their mercenary designs and subtle devices, I have had to contend; and shall continue to contend to the last. The result of the contest will decide the vital question to New York, whether those who are adverse to good government are paramount; and whether the people are worthy of, and capable of appreciating an houest and fearless discharge of official trust.

are worthy of, and capable of appreciations and fearless discharge of official trust.

While thus freely denouncing the interests opposed to right, and to myself, as its advocate and administrator, let me not be thought unmindful of the noble support which has been given to me by those who have favored my efforts. All classes but those referred to have railied to the defense of my exertions,

and given to me such a support as no other public ofand given to me such a support as no other public of-ficer of the present day has received. Surely, if en-couragement were needed to continued falcity, public ophrion which has been expressed in my behalf with to made enthusia in and unanimally, would keep me-stendfurt in the course I have pursued. No man could falter, however actions the duty, or however posi-ous the hazard, when backed up so vigorously by all those in our midst whose good opinion is worth

I have now discussed briefly and in general term

I have now discussed briefly and in general terms the two requirements essential to the present prosperity and continued growth of this metropolis, vizithe preservation and further development of its commerce, and the proper government of its people. It may be said with truth, when these are cared for, New York is placed upon a basis as firm as the rock upon the louders of her noble Hudson. With these secured she is placed beyond the threes of political revolution in either hemisphere. Wars upon the Continent of Europe, or in the East, will be further aid her navigation. Her financial position will soon command the exchanges of the world, and as her Bourse vibrates, the money-changers of Europe will respond to the movement. First in arts as first in mand the exchanges of the world, and as her Bourse vibrates, the money-changets of Europe will respond to the movement. First in arts as first in commerce and wealth, she will then represent American superiority in every department of knowledge and in all the noble attributes of our nature so preeminent in the present century. Then will a New-Yorker be proud of his citizenship in this metropois; it will bear him honerable reception throughout all civilized lands; for he can say with Paul of Tursus. "I am a citizen of no mean city." I shall submit to you seen another Message making

practical recommendations for your own legislation, and which, in advance, permit me to express the hope, may command your early attention.

In that communication I shall endeavor to point out many subjects to imprehending abuses and wrongs

with me in devising suitable measures.

FERNANDO WOOD, Mayor.

NEW-YORK HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY.

The regular monthly meeting of this Society was held at Clinton Hall last evening, Mr. John Groshon, President, Peter B. Mead, Secretary. After reading the minutes, Mr. Mend read the report of the com-mittee on the last Annual Exhibition, which was

Dr. KNIGHT, from the Lecture Committee, reported Dr. KNIGHT, from the Lecture Commutes, reported that the Committee found no difficulty in obtaining a lecturer on Vegetable Physiology and its relations to Horticulture; but that, in order to make the lecture intelligible, diagrams were needed, which could not be precured; therefore he asked that the Committee be discharged. The Report was accepted and the Committee discharged. ommittee discharged.

Mr. Witson G. Hunr offered the annexed resolution

Mr. Wilson G. Hunn offered the annexed resolution which was adopted:

Resolved, That the Society hold quarterly exhibitious of plants and flowers, at which prizes shall be awarded for the best and most nevel varieties. The exhibitions to be held on the afternoon and evening of the first Monday in April, July, October and January. The exhibitions to be open to the members of the Society and their tandles and friends free of classe.

Mr. John Cranston, Florist, of Hoboken, N. J., exhibited a beautiful and tastefully arranged parlor bouquet; also seeding hybrid Begonias, crosses between Begonia Manicala, vom Lacarnata, and between Begonia Fuchsoides, rom Fuchsoides Alba both being distinctly marked, and, in the opinion of the Committee on Flowers, decided acquisitions.

Mr. Maittis Colliary, Gardener to John H. Prentice, esq., of Brooklyn Hights, exhibited a large and splendid specimen of Cypripodium Indigus, bearing nime blooms. A diploma of merit was voted to Mr. Collapy, and the meeting adjourned.

BROOKLYN COMMON COUNCIL. No PRESIDENT ELECTED.—This body assembled last evening, and a large and apparently interested

audience was in attendance.

Ald, Hustly moved that the Mayor take the chair,
Ald, Campbell nominated Ald, Bergen of the

Eighth Ward.
A vote being taken, Akl. Bergen was chosen by a vote 21 Yeas to 8 Nays.
The roll was then called, and all the thirty six mem-The roll was then called, and all the thirty six members, as published yesterday, answered to their names. The Mayor claimed a right to vote on questions before the Board, which, after an elaborate discussion, was decided in the negative by the Chair.

The Board then proceeded to ballot for President—Ald, Oakley and Lerissey, Tellers.

The candidates were Edward Pell (Dem.), Edward T. Backhouse (Whig) and Ald. A. Casswell (Dem.).

Nicoteon ballots were had without coming to a

T. Backhouse (Whig) and Ald. A. Casswell (Dem.)
Nineteen ballots were had without coming to a
choice. Upon the first, Pell received 17; Backhouse,
16; Blank, 2. On the aineteenth, Pell received 14;
Backhouse, 16; Casswell, 4; and Blank 2.
There heing no prospect of making a selection, the
Beard adjourned shortly after 10 o'clock, to meet on
Wednesday evening at 6 o clock.

THE TENTH WARD KNOW-NOTHINGS.

One of our reporters, who has several times been invited by a member of the Know-Nothing Council in the Tenth Ward to attend their meetings, took occasien on Saturday evening to avail himself of the privilege. Arrived at the room, corner of Grand and Ludlow streets, a few moments before the hour, he found the brothers in groups about the room, discuss ng the appointment of young Joe Taylor. Now and then an eath, emphatically expressed, aroused the attention of all. It seems that a man-oracle by the same of Benjamin Van Riper, who is a member of Council No. 5, was expecting to be named for the po-sition of Superintendent of Lands and Piaces. His viends had " bet high on it," and it is said that he was o confident as to think "a hundred to fifty" was per sectly safe. Their discomfiture worked itself off in

Our reporter learned in a private way that Bro. A T. Brooks, the President, had reason to believe that he was to be "taken care of," but that a small clerkship is all he is to have. The dissatisfaction at this result was not noisy. It was that silent, severe kind, which may profess satisfaction at \$700 or \$800 n year, but which the Street Commissioner will do well to counteract before either he or any of his relatives try gain for the public crib; as the union of Bro. Brooks and Bro. Van Riper in a common revenge will produce incalculable results. With regard to the general appearance of the Broth-

erhood, our reporter takes this occasion to express his surprise that so vast a majority, for nearly all of them vere so, were boys. On inquiry if no men of influence or standing in the Ward ever came, he was surprised to learn that Henry C. Atwood, late Hard-Shell can lighte for Alderman, beside several of his friends, wer members: also that Alderman James Grafith, elect, ned long been a faithful member. He also learned that John Van Tine, Councilman elect from the Iwenty-Sixth District, was a member in good standng. Beside several others of prominence in the Ward, but who graciously allow the youthful Samuel to man age all national affairs. He also learned that the main object of this Council now, and in fact the only object it ever had, was to save the Union, and to hate "Bill Seward," because " he is opposed to our Order." The principle that none but Americans shall rule America now virtually abandoned. If they say otherwise, t is only to "carry points," and be called "smart" but to repudiate the principle the instant an office of intropage is secured.

At the appointed time Bro. Brooks, the President. took the chair. The reading of minutes of previous neeting and the initiation of one member, was prosy, and occupied considerable time. It was relieved however, by the arrival of a man who came in puffing and blowing, shaking, stamping, and thrashing to rid himself of snow. From his manner any one would be convinced that he was the chief operator there. Our reporter inquired him out, and found that he was the veritable Van Riper, who is President of the National Club, and is on the Committee of Invitation for the Bali of January 8. He is "some" on a speech, and from his readiness to speak upon all questions, has been nicknamed "The Oracle." Bro. Wainwright, the Know-Nothing Inspector of

Weights and Measures under Joseph E. Ebling, the Know-Nothing Commissioner of Streets and Lamps, moved that nominations be made for officers of Council No. 5, and that the election of the same be made a special order for the next meeting, which was carried. The same brother immediately took the floor, and instead of making a nemination, made another motion, viz: That three delegates be elected from this Council to meet in convention with the same number of delegates from each of the other Councils in the city, with power like the Committees of the old political parties. This motion prevailed. The following brothers were put in nomination: Ald. Griffith, Assessor Van Dusen, Van Riper, President J. T. Brooks, Bros. Ira Beeckmen, Flandreau, White, Willis and Rapsom. A warm

discussion ensued upon the mode and manner of conducting the election. Bro. Hall asked for an information ballot. Bro. Van Riper opposed it, on the ground, as he said, that he had " always been on the squaire, and and had acted honorably and manly, so far as the American question was concerned, and he did not wish to be treated informally here or anywhere elec. Our reporter was-surprised at this argument, as he could see no connection between it and the question before the Council. He learned, however, that the was usual with Bro. Van Riper, and that his speech was about the same on all occasions. On taking the question, the proposition was lost. Bro. Beeckman lso asked leave to set on the squaire, and to go according to the Constitution. He moved that the delegator be elected singly. Bro. Van Riper again came up to oppose this, but the Constitution and Bro. B. were too

The motion of Bro. B. prevailed. On proceeding to ballot the great popularity of Ald. Griffith was manifest. The boys on all sides said, "Go in for Griffish first." "Go in, boys," "Go in." Of the 68 votes. cast the Alderman received 43. This announcem preduced a stamp, and a speech from Ald. G. He promised to be on the squaire. Brother Brooks was next elected by a vote of 39 to 24. Bro. Brooks returned thanks for the honor. The remaining ballot resulted in the polling of 74 votes, which was ten more than there were voters. Of these Bro. Beeckman received 37. Before the result was announced a verdant young man asked if the President would count the voters present. The result produced an explosion. The ten illegal votes were discovered, and a new ballot ordered. This time Bro. Beeckman received 20 votes out of 64.

At this juncture the collection was taken up. The nominations for officers of the Council were now made.
For President, Bros. George W. Wheeler, Howard R. Coats and Elias Combs. The names of pominees for subordinate offices are omitted, because they were nearly the same all the way through. Bro. Van Riper moved that no person who had

withdrawn from the Council be reinstated before the first day of January, 1857, except he be regularly propesed, balloted for and reinstated, precisely like a new member. Bro. V. stated as a reason for this motion but in his absence from the previous meeting several who had withdrawn came near being restored to mem berehip, and fearing that it might be brought about at some other time, when he or his friends were away, he desired to have the matter "nailed." Bro. Wainwright blandly asked if Bro. Van Riper was the whole Council: and as most of the members had left, asked to have the question laid over one week. Bro. Van Riper again arose, and informed the brothers of his continued manliness and squairness, and on this ground!! moved the previous question!!!

Brother Beeckman suddenly arose and offered to bet \$50 that the previous question could not be put. No ne seemed willing to take the bet, though several old 'sports" were present.

One brother appealed to Jefferson's Manual, another o the By-Laws of Chancery and Arch Chancery of the United Americans, to settle the bet offered by Brother Beeckman. Brother Brooks put the previous question on the

esolution, and it was carried. Brother Beeckman gave notice that he should appeal to the Grand Council. A motion to reconsider was put but lost. The Council, having now thinned down to about twenty, adjourned. Our reporter was exceedingly amused at the manne

f doing business in Council No. 5, and has resolved to be there every evening until the brothers become reconciled to the appointments made by Young Joeespecially that of Superintendent of Lands and Places.

FIRES.

FIRE IN AVENUE C.

At ten minutes past 7 o'clock last night a fire broke out in a stable in the rear of No. 171 Avenue C, occupied by Clinton & Montague. The firemen of the VIth District repaired to the scene of action with all possible haste, and soon succeeded in extinguishing the fismes, not, however, before the building and contents were damaged to the amount of about \$150. No insurance. The building is owned by a widow, whose

name we did not learn. STILWELL'S FOUNDERY IN BROOKLYN DESTROYED.

Early on Monday morning a fire broke out in the third story of George W. Stilwell's foundery, Nos. 195 and 107 Court street, near Dean. The flames were discovered bursting out of one of the windows by Offier Nesbitt of the HId District Police, who gave the darm. The streets being obstructed with deep snowbanks, rendered it exceedingly difficult for the Fire Department to reach the scene of the disaster in time to be of any avail. No. 19 engine, lying near by, worked her way to the fire. No. 8 became fastened it a snow-bank in Willoughby street, and was aided to he fire by the First District Police. The IVth Dis triect Police gided the firemen to bring No. 9. When No. 8 arrived No. 13 was standing still for want of water; she was then supplied by No. 8 through 700 feet of hose. Nos. 6 and 14, Hose No. 6 and Hookand-Ladder No. 4, and others, worked their way there as best they could, and exerted themselves to the ex-

tent of their ability.

The building was of brick, four stories in hight, with an extended point. It was divided into a foundery, blacksmith-shop, and grate and fender manufactery. The rooms were filled with materials, finished and unfinished. The fire spread rapidly, and made a great light. The building was soon entirely enveloped in flames, and communicated with an adjoining frame three-story building, which together with the foundery,

No fire was kept in the place where the flames originated and it is consequently supposed to be the work f an incendiary.

The adjoining building was owned by Edward Harvey and eccupied by Mrs. Flinn as a toy and clothing store and by John Steele as a residence. The combined loss of the occupants reached about \$800-as nsurance. The building was worth about \$2,500. The loss on the foundery is estimated at \$50,000, upon which there is an insurance of only about \$15,000, in several Brooklyn and New-York offices.

The blacksmith-shop which was in the rear was saved. A serious and perhaps fatal accident occurred during the progress of the fire. Abraham J. S. Degraw foreman of Hook and Ladder Company No. 4, in aiding Mrs. Flinn to take out her goods, was struck down by the falling of the wall of the foundary. His head was frectured and his thigh and arm were broken. He is in a precarious condition. He resides on the corner of Amity and Clinton streets, whither he was con-

CITY ITEMS. MEMORIAL CHURCH OF BISHOF WATEWRIGHT .-

The ladies who interested themselves last Spring is raising means for establishing a free church, as the most appropriate monument to Bishop Wainwright, after making encouraging progress in the work, they were advised that, owing to the then state of embarresement in money matters, and the extreme suffering among the poor, it was best to intermit their labors for a season. They did so. But the difficulty be now removed, they return to their work, and in this appeal, which they address to the Church at large, they ask for the means of accomplishing it. They have already accured the sum of \$11,000, and the requisite land for the edifice has accordingly been purhased, on Troy street, near Grecowich avenue, which the subscriptions already made will pay for. They need now the means of placing upon that land an appropriate edifice, to be for all time a free church in the communion of the Protestant Episcopal Church of the United States, and to be known as the Memoria Church of Bishop Wainwright. In order to accomplish their work, they rely upon obtaining a sufficient aum-ber of donations, and subscriptions of \$15 at one time; or \$5 per annum for three specessive years. scriptions may be sent to the Tressurer, Mrs. Heavy